

Christmas 2023 Heaven Invades Earth -HOPE

And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. [9] An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. [10] But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. [11] Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. [12] This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." [13] Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, [14] "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests." **Luke 2:8-14**

Introduction - Understanding the Culture at the time of Jesus

- The people were living under occupation by the Romans - A military dictatorship
- The Roman Empire spread throughout Europe and North Africa and the land around the Mediterranean Sea.
- Life was difficult, dreams diminished and the future looked bleak
- Heavily taxed as much as 50/60% - making ends meet was difficult
- Raising a family difficult
- The Jews lived with a promise from God that a Messiah or deliverer would come to their aid.
- It was into that dark and hopeless environment that an Angel proclaims the words we just :

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Today

- Our day is not that different to Jesus time
- Massive unrest globally in numerous nations - currently more than 35 armed conflicts globally
- Fuel prices rising over the last few years
- Mortgage and Rent payments increased
- Price of food high
- Society increasingly hostile towards one another
- Mental health is an epidemic impacting all ages and alarming children and young people
- Many people live with fear and little or no hope
- And into our day here in 2023 the Bible speaks those eternal living words:

... "**Do not be afraid.** I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. [11] Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.... "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favour rests." **Luke 2:10-14**

1. Do not be afraid - Supernatural

- 365 'Fear Not' statements in the Bible
- People live with many fears that debilitate their lives
- Fear of lack, fear of others, fear of the future, fear of the dark - so many fears

For God has not given us a spirit of fear and timidity, but of power, love, and self-discipline. **2 Timothy 1:7 NLT**

- How can the angel say 'Do not be afraid'? Because of the news that's being told
- Because of Christ you do not need to be afraid

2. I bring you good news - From another realm

- O How we need good news
- The Gospel of Jesus Christ is GOOD news
- Glorious news

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. **John 3:16**

The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I have come that they may have life, and have it to the full. **John 10:10**

3. That it will cause **great joy for all people**

- Joy is our strength
- It's God's Joy in us
- It's joy rooted in another Kingdom/realm
- It's joy in a person, a relationship

I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. **John 15:11**

- From union with Christ
- Living in obedience to him
- Loving him and being loved by him

4. A **saviour** is born, He is the **Messiah** the **Lord**

V11 - Today in the town of David a Saviour has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord.

- The reason not to fear - Jesus
- The good news - Jesus
- Great joy - In Jesus

- All the hope was in a Saviour - A person who saves some from danger or difficulty
 - He saves us from Sin and the judgement to come
- The Messiah - The promised deliverer - The One
- The Lord - Master and one having authority over others our safe place

5. **Glory to God** in the highest heaven

- By this God will be Glorified
 - Reconciling people back to himself - Redeeming
 - Living with them and in them
- He will be exalted
- People will recognise his supremacy and authority

Not to us, LORD, not to us but to your name be the glory, because of your love and faithfulness.

Psalms 115:1

6. On earth **peace** to those on whom his favour rests

- Peace to people - Shalom,
- Shalom - completeness and wholeness, nothing missing
- An aligned life - living in harmony
- A life at peace - the removal of anarchy, chaos and disorder
- Peace in a person - Jesus

For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. **Isaiah 9:6**

Application - Come to Christ

"Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. [29] Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. [30] For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." **Matthew 11:28-30**

Peter replied, "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **Acts 2:38**